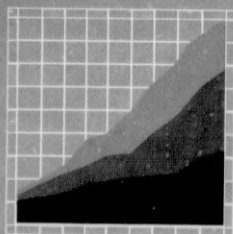


# Statistics Weekly

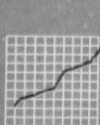
Thursday, 28 November 1991

## *The week in statistics ...*

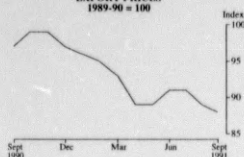
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statistics



EXPORT PRICES  
1989=100



## Another fall in export prices

Export prices fell 1.1 per cent between August and September 1991, after a fall of 2.2 per cent in the previous month.

Price falls were recorded for a wide range of items in September, mainly caused by falls in world commodity prices. The largest price falls were for wool and for aluminium products.

These decreases were partly offset by small price increases for about one third of the items in the index.

On an annual basis, export prices fell by 9.3 per cent between September 1990 and September 1991.

The wide range of price changes for different commodities is shown below.

EXPORT PRICES, SEPTEMBER 1991  
Percentage change

Commodity	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Live animals and animal products	-1.1	0.0
Motor vehicles, aircraft and vessels	-2.0	-1.0
Prepared foodstuffs	4.7	-4.3
Machinery and appliances	0.0	-5.1
Gold, diamonds and coin	0.0	-6.3
Mineral products	-1.0	-6.5
Products of chemicals or allied industries	0.0	-8.9
Vegetable products	0.0	-9.5
Base metals	-4.8	-19.4
Wool and cotton fibres	-9.9	-26.4
All exports	-1.1	-9.3

For further information, order the publication *Export Price Index, Australia* (6405.0), or contact Peter Cordy on (06) 252 5541.

## New motor vehicle registrations

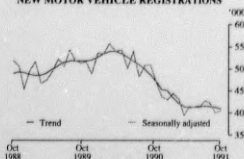
The October 1991 trend estimate of total new motor vehicle registrations declined by 0.9 per cent to 40,929 vehicles compared with the September figure of 41,293. This follows successive monthly declines of 0.2 per cent and 0.5 per cent. Car and station wagon registrations fell 0.6 per cent to 34,647 vehicles while 'other vehicles' fell 2.5 per cent to 6,282 vehicles.

In seasonally adjusted terms, total new motor vehicle registrations rose 1.5 per cent to 40,584 vehicles. Car and station wagon registrations increased 1.9 per cent to 34,309 vehicles, while 'other vehicles' showed a slight drop of 0.6 per cent to 6,275 vehicles.

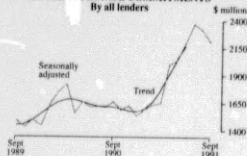
For the unadjusted series, all vehicles showed an increase in registrations for October 1991. Total new motor vehicle registrations rose 6.4 per cent to 42,966 vehicles, car and station wagon registrations increased by 5.8 per cent to 36,318 vehicles and 'other vehicle' registrations increased by 9.4 per cent to 6,648 vehicles.

For further information, order the publication *Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Australia*, Preliminary (9301.0), or contact Kevin Yeadon on (06) 252 6255.

NEW MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS



HOUSING FINANCE COMMITMENTS  
By all lenders



## Housing finance down in all categories in September

Seasonally adjusted housing finance commitments for September 1991 (excluding alterations and additions) totalled \$2204.7 million, a decrease of \$109.0 million (4.7%) on August 1991 but an increase of \$542.6 million (32.6%) over September 1990.

Lending commitments for all housing finance categories fell:

- ☐ commitments for purchase of established dwellings decreased by 2.3 per cent;
- ☐ commitments for purchase of newly erected dwellings decreased by 22.1 per cent; and,
- ☐ commitments for construction of dwellings, which had climbed steadily since January 1991, decreased by 9.5 per cent.

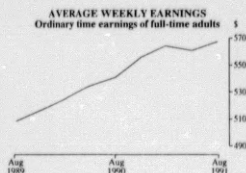
In unadjusted terms, New South Wales was the only State to record an increase, up 5.8 per cent.

The decline in the seasonally adjusted value of total housing finance in September followed a smaller August fall which had put an end to seven consecutive months of rises. However, for the three months ended September 1991, seasonally adjusted lending commitments totalled \$6889 million, up \$645 million (10.3%) on the June quarter 1991 and up \$1997 million (40.8%) on the September quarter 1990.

HOUSING FINANCE COMMITMENTS, SEPTEMBER 1991  
Excluding alterations and additions

	\$ million	Percentage change	
		From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Type of lender — seasonally adjusted			
All banks	1,728.3	-3.5	37.1
Permanent building societies	262.0	-9.4	39.4
Other lenders	214.4	-8.5	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,204.7</b>	<b>-4.7</b>	<b>32.6</b>
States — original			
New South Wales	795.5	5.8	37.7
Victoria	473.9	-6.1	35.9
Queensland	395.0	-6.1	48.7
South Australia	136.1	-8.7	-6.7
Western Australia	176.7	-18.6	37.4
Tasmania	33.2	-6.7	12.9
Northern Territory	10.7	-2.7	1.9
Australian Capital Territory	47.2	-14.5	35.6
<b>Australia</b>	<b>2,068.2</b>	<b>-3.6</b>	<b>34.2</b>

For further information, order the publication *Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia* (5609.0), or contact Mark Dennis on (06) 252 7129 or John Carson on (06) 252 7110.



## Slight increase in average weekly earnings

Preliminary estimates show that average weekly ordinary time earnings rose by 1.2 per cent for full-time adults between May and August 1991. The small rise followed a rare decline (of 0.6%) in the same measure in the three months to May, and brought the increase in the year to August to 4.9 per cent (see table below).

Full-time adult ordinary time earnings increased by 1.2 per cent for males, females and persons in the last quarter (to \$599.10, \$506.60 and \$567.50 respectively).

**AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS**  
**AUGUST 1991**

	Average weekly earnings (\$)			Percentage change in 'Persons' from	
	Males	Females	Persons	May 91	Aug. 90
Full-time adults					
Ordinary time	599.10	506.60	567.50	1.2	4.9
Total	637.70	517.90	596.80	0.8	3.7
All employees	575.20	383.50	488.90	0.9	3.0

Compositional changes in the labour force continue to affect the estimates for this quarter. The April 1991 National Wage Case is having some minor effect.

For full-time adult persons, average weekly total earnings increased by 0.8 per cent (an increase of 3.7% in the year to August). Male earnings increased by 0.8 per cent (2.9% over the year) while female average weekly total earnings increased by 1.1 per cent (6.0% over the year).

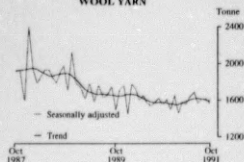
Average weekly earnings statistics represent average gross (before tax) earnings of employees and do not relate to average award rates nor to the earnings of the 'average person'. Estimates of average weekly earnings are derived by dividing estimates of weekly total earnings by estimates of employment. Changes in the averages may be affected not only by changes in the level of earnings of employees but also by changes in the overall composition of the labour force.

It should also be noted by those using average weekly earnings data for contractual adjustment or related purposes, that these estimates are preliminary.

Final estimates for August 1991 are expected to be published on 19 December 1991 in *Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia, August 1991* (6302.0).

For further information, order the publication *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, Preliminary* (6301.0), or contact Mick Atkinson on (06) 252 5946.

WOOL YARN



## Manufacturing in October ...

The publication *Manufacturing Production, Australia, Preliminary (8301.0)* contains up-to-date time series data on the production of twenty-seven major indicators of production (twenty-five seasonally adjusted). The indicator commodities have been selected to give a broad industry representation of the manufacturing sector and are part of a much larger range of commodity items published in the series of ten Manufacturing Production Bulletins.

In the table below, the 'previous year' column is a generally more reliable guide to trends, but should be read in conjunction with the more detailed data presented in the monthly publications, as the production of manufacturing commodities can vary quite significantly on a month-to-month basis, even after seasonal adjustment.

MANUFACTURING PRODUCTION  
OCTOBER 1991  
Seasonally adjusted, percentage change

Product	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Domestic refrigerators	11.0	23.2
Television sets	-12.3	12.5
Basic iron, spiegeleisen and sponge iron	7.8	8.1
Woven man-made fibre fabric	9.2	5.1
Woven cotton fabric (including towelling)	20.4	4.3
Iron and steel ingots or in other primary forms	4.5	3.4
Electricity	-1.1	1.9
Wool yarn	-2.9	0.6
Gas available for issue through mains	-4.5	0.5
Woven wool fabric (including blanketing)	-20.8	-1.3
Blooms and slabs, from rolling and forging	-7.2	-1.3
Beer	7.1	-3.6
Cotton yarn	6.0	-3.7
Sulphuric acid; oleum	22.3	-3.8
Textile floor coverings	-6.5	-7.4
Chocolate based confectionery	-7.2	-9.2
Portland cement	8.3	-9.6
Other confectionery	-15.3	-10.6
Electric motors	-11.5	-11.4
Cars and station wagons	7.2	-16.2
Cigarettes and tobacco	-26.9	-17.6
Clay bricks	-2.7	-17.7
Petrol-rotary type lawn mowers	16.4	-17.8
Domestic clothes washing machines	-28.4	-22.7
Motor vehicles for goods and materials	6.7	-29.0

## Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

- ☐ through its bookshops
- ☐ by mail order  
(including subscription)
- ☐ by facsimile
- ☐ electronically.

To order any of the publications that appear in *Statistics Weekly* or to inquire about the statistics and services available from the ABS, contact Information Services at any of the offices listed below. An Information Consultancy Service in each office provides assistance of a more extensive or complex nature.

### ABS Central Office

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BELCONNEN ACT 2616

☎ (06) 252 6627  
FAX (06) 253 1404

### ABS State Offices

☎ NSW (02) 268 4611  
Vic. (03) 615 7000  
Qld (07) 222 6351  
WA (09) 323 5140  
SA (08) 237 7100  
Tas. (002) 20 5800  
NT (089) 81 3456

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### Suggestions

Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

Robert Nixon  
Editor  
*Statistics Weekly*  
(06) 252 6104

**Statistics Weekly**  
**28 November 1991**

## All the week's releases: 20 to 26 November

### General

- Publications Advice, 22 November 1991 (1105.0; free)
- Publications Advice, 26 November 1991 (1105.0; free)
- Monthly Summary of Statistics, Aust., November 1991 (1304.0; \$19.00)
- Australia at a Glance, 1992 (1309.0; \$1.00)
- Statistics Weekly, 21 November 1991 (1318.0; \$4.00)
- Queensland Year Book, 1992 (1301.3; \$36.95)
- Economic Indicators, WA, November 1991 (1307.5; \$5.50)

### National accounts, finance and foreign trade

- Foreign Trade, Aust., Merchandise Imports, 1990-91 (5426.0; \$18.00)  
(Previously: Imports, Aust., Annual Summary Tables)
- Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Aust., September 1991 (5609.0; \$10.00)
- Commercial Finance, Aust., September 1991 (5643.0; \$5.50)
- Lease Finance, Aust., September 1991 (5644.0; \$5.50)

### Labour statistics and prices

- The Labour Force, Aust., October 1991 (6203.0; \$14.50)
- Average Weekly Earnings, Aust., August 1991, Preliminary (6301.0; \$10.00)
- Industrial Disputes, Aust., August 1991 (6321.0; \$7.00)
- Export Price Index, Aust., September 1991 (6405.0; \$7.50)

### Agriculture

- Livestock Products — Meat, Qld, September 1991 (7204.3; \$4.50)

### Secondary industry and distribution

- Manufacturing Production, Aust., October 1991, Preliminary (8301.0; \$10.00)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Building Materials and Fittings, September 1991 (8361.0; \$6.50)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Energy Products, September 1991 (8368.0; \$4.50)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Wood and Wood Products, September 1991 (8369.0; \$4.50)
- Production Statistics, NSW, August 1991 (8304.1; \$7.50)
- Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, NSW, August 1991 (8741.1; \$10.00)
- Building Approvals, WA, October 1991 (8731.5; \$10.00)

### Transport

- Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Aust., October 1991, Preliminary (9301.3; \$10.00)
- Motor Vehicle Registrations, WA, July 1991 (9303.5; \$7.00)



## Calendar of key releases

Expected releases over the fortnight to 10 December 1991

### November

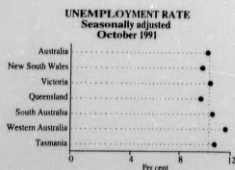
- 27** Balance of Payments, Australia, September 1991  
(5302.0; \$20.00)
- 28** Foreign Investment, Australia, September 1991 Preliminary  
(5307.0; \$10.00)
- Company Profits, Australia, September 1991 (5651.0; \$10.00)
- Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House  
Building, Eight Capital Cities, September 1991  
(6407.0; \$10.00)
- Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State  
Capital Cities and Canberra, September 1991 (6408.0; \$7.50)
- Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries,  
Australia, September 1991 (6411.0; \$10.00)
- 29** Price indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry,  
Australia, September 1991 (6412.0; \$10.00)
- Private New Capital Expenditure, Australia, Actual and  
Expected Expenditure, September 1991 Preliminary  
(5625.0; \$10.00)

### December

- 2** Balance of Payments, Australia, October 1991 (5301.0; \$15.00)
- Building Approvals, Australia, October 1991 (8731.0; \$12.50)

## The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to  
26 November 1991



	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (Mar. qtr 91)*	-8.4	-22.7	0	-8.9	-7.0	-16.9	n.a.	n.a.	-10.2
Retail turnover (Sept. 91) (trend estimate)	4.4	2.2	3.5	5.0	5.8	3.9	n.a.	10.1	4.0
New motor vehicle registrations (Oct. 91)† (a)	-21.2	-33.4	-16.6	-12.4	-2.5	-10.0	-12.6	12.5	-20.3
Number of dwelling unit approvals (Sept. 91)	15.0	12.7	28.5	-3.5	21.2	29.6	7.1	16.6	17.2
Value of total building work done (June qtr 91)	-8.3	-28.6	4.7	-11.4	-27.9	-0.5	39.9	18.1	-13.2
Employed persons (Oct. 91)*	-2.0	-3.9	-0.5	-3.9	-1.9	-2.0	1.9	0.3	-2.4
Capital city consumer price index (Sept. qtr 91)	2.8	3.9	3.3	4.1	1.9	3.6	3.3	3.7	3.3
Average weekly earnings (full- time adult ordinary time) (May 91)	3.6	5.2	5.7	6.5	8.1	3.1	5.8	5.6	5.0
Population (Dec. 90)	1.1	1.3	2.3	1.1	2.2	1.1	1.2	2.5	1.5
Room nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc (June qtr 91)	-1.9	-1.4	7.8	-4.5	-2.2	2.6	-4.6	-7.8	0.1

\* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT. † Seasonally adjusted except for Tas., NT and ACT.  
(a) Refer to footnote (e) on next page.

## Key national indicators – consolidated to 26 November 1991

				Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on	
				Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year
Period							
<b>National production</b>							
Gross domestic product	— current prices	\$m	June qtr 91	92,362	93,956	-1.2	-1.2
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	62,148	63,912	-1.0	-2.4
<b>Industrial activity</b>							
New capital expenditure	— current prices	\$m	June qtr 91	6,304	6,011	-8.9	-13.4
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	4,808	4,577	-8.2	-13.4
Expected new capital expenditure		"	Six months to Dec. 91	12,756	n.a.	n.a.	-18.5
Retail turnover	— current prices	"	Sept. 91	7,225.8	7,642.4	-1.8	2.6
	— 1984-85 prices	"	Sept. qtr 91	14,915.3	15,486.9	2.9	0.2
New motor vehicle registrations (e)		no.	Oct. 91	42,966	40,584	1.5	-20.3
Dwelling unit approvals		"	Sept. 91	12,136	12,198	2.7	15.6
Value of all building approvals		\$m	"	1,624	1,616	-4.9	-15.7
Value of total building work done	— current prices	"	June qtr 91	6,253	6,264	-5.1	-13.2
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	3,963	3,970	-4.7	-13.3
Manufacturers' sales	— current prices	"	June qtr 91	33,638	33,765	-1.7	-3.7
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	23,225	23,337	-1.8	-5.0
Expected manufacturers' sales		"	Six months to Dec. 91	71,691	n.a.	n.a.	-5.0
<b>Labour</b>							
Employed persons		'000	Oct. 91	7,687.8	7,686.4	-0.2	-2.4
Unemployment rate †		%	"	9.4	10.1	-0.1	2.4
Participation rate †		"	"	62.6	63.0	-0.3	-0.9
Job vacancies		'000	Aug. 91	25.6	25.1	-2.1	-46.9
Average weekly overtime per employee		hours	"	1.07	1.11	-1.0	-12.2
<b>Prices, profits and wages</b>							
Consumer price index	1980-81 = 100.0		Sept. qtr 91	215.7	n.a.	0.6	3.3
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industries (g)	1984-85 = 100.0		Aug. 91	119.9	n.a.	-0.4	-2.0
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry	1988-89 = 100.0		Aug. 91	111.2	n.a.	-0.2	1.5
Company profits before income tax (g)		\$m	June qtr 91	2,469	2,697	7.4	-23.1
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)		\$	Aug. 91	567.50	n.a.	1.2	4.9
<b>Interest rates (b) (monthly average)</b>							
90-day bank bills †	% per annum		Oct. 91	8.70	n.a.	-0.85	-4.10
10-year Treasury bonds †		"	"	9.80	n.a.	-0.50	-3.55
<b>Balance of payments</b>							
Exports of merchandise		\$m	Sept. 91	4,584	4,637	0.2	9.9
Imports of merchandise		"	"	4,169	4,337	16.9	6.1
Balance on merchandise trade (c)		"	"	415	300	-67.9	227.3
Balance of goods and services (c)		"	"	-75	-46	n.a.	76.8
Balance on current account (c)		"	"	-1,336	-1,332	-121.3	2.6
Terms of trade (d) (f)	1984-85 = 100.0		June qtr 91	n.a.	100.2	1.2	-5.2
<b>Foreign investment</b>							
Net foreign debt (g)		\$m	30 June 91	131,340	n.a.	-1.7	3.7
Net foreign liabilities (g)		"	"	177,295	n.a.	2.3	7.0
<b>Exchange rates (monthly average)</b>							
US\$	per SA		Sept. 91	0.7927	n.a.	1.3	-3.9
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0		"	60.5	n.a.	0.2	-1.8
<b>Other indicators</b>							
Population (resident at end of qtr) (f)	million		Mar. 91	17.3	n.a.	0.4	1.5
Overseas visitor arrivals	'000		Aug. 91	199	209	-2.7	8.3

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports. (e) September 1991 is not strictly comparable with September 1990 due to the introduction by motor vehicle registration authorities of a more accurate identification and classification system. (f) Later figures expected to be released Wednesday, 27 November 1991. (g) Later figures expected to be released Thursday, 28 November 1991.

NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 6).

Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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